

October, 2005

The HARC Spark

The Official Newsletter of the
Holmesburg Amateur Radio Club
P.O. Box 6253 Philadelphia, PA 19136
WM3PEN 146.685 Mhz Repeater PL 131.8
{K3FI} CLUB CALLS {WM3PEN}

Celebrating Over 25 years of Serving the Philadelphia Area

Web Site <http://www.harcnet.org>



Editor: KB3AKK

Tech Report

The back-up repeater failed in operation where it will not pass audio. When I got it home it worked fine. I had it in the basement and after a month of no failure moved it to the garage where it was hot and in three weeks it failed again. We lost electric during a storm and when I turned it on it operated fine. I had to wait another two weeks before it failed again. I am troubleshooting now. The old main repeater is configured as a single site and is operating. However, I believe the sensitivity is not up to par. I plan a trip to the main site to adjust the receiver.

Ron K3RJG

Web Page Update!

Thanks to Rich KB3FGJ, the HARC web page has been updated. There is plenty of useful information and dates there. Stop by and check it out!

October General Meeting

At the meeting we'll have a copy of the ARRL 2006 Handbook with CD and the bonus copy of the 1926 Handbook. [ARRL Web: ARRL Product Catalog](#) This will be included in the evening drawing.

Parade Day Fast Approaching!

Charge up your batteries and get ready, the annual Mayfair-Holmesburg Thanksgiving Day Parade is next month. This is the club's biggest public service event of the year. Sunday November 20th from 11am till around 4pm. We will meet at the Wachovia Bank parking lot at Frankford & Rhawn by 11am. If you are willing to come out and help, let Mike (N3LXN), Bob (WA3PZO), or Dave (KB3AKK) know as soon as possible. If you have never done a public service event, check out the web page for information on what to expect and what to bring. It's always a fun time!!

UPCOMING EVENTS

General Meeting
Thursday October 27th.
8PM @ 8th District
Academy & Red Lion Roads

"Note Date Change!"

General Meeting
Friday November 18th
8PM @ 8th. District

Sunday November 20th.
Mayfair-Holmesburg
Thanksgiving Day Parade
Approx. 11:00-4:00
Frankford Avenue @ Rhawn Street

Prez Sez

Hope everybody had a great summer and now welcome to autumn. With winter right around the corner now might be a good time to make sure radios, antennas, batteries etc. are in good shape for the winter. What better opportunity to exercise your ht's than the Mayfair Holmesburg Thanksgiving parade on the 20th of November. In the past we have had good weather for this event. This may be the last time this year that you get out for a couple of hours, have a good time with your fellow hams and serve the community thru ham radio.

There's plenty of things going on with the club, repeater and web site. If you haven't seen the web site lately check it out.

Hope to see you at the meeting.

Mike 73

H.A.R.C. Board Of Directors 2005

President : N3LXN : Mike Wurgley

Vice Pres: WA3PZO : Bob Josuweit

Treasurer : W3KZA : Sid Kalos

Secretary : N3ZZN: Frank Flanagan

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Trustee : KB3AKK : Dave Hogan

Trustee : K3CJ : Charlye Johnson

Tech Committee : K3RJC : Ron Cardullo

Newsletter Editor : KB3AKK: Dave Hogan

H.A.R.C. Maintains a Web Page @www.harcnet.org

All members online can be emailed via their callsign

@harcnet.org. Articles, pictures etc. submitted for the newsletter should be in standard ASCII or MS Word, .jpg or .gif formats and E-mailed to the Editor no later than the 1ST of month to be included in the next edition! Send info to WA3PZO @ [Harcnet.org](mailto:harcnet.org)

H.A.R.C. Nets meet on 146.685 weekly

The Chaverim Net: Tuesday @ 9:00 PM

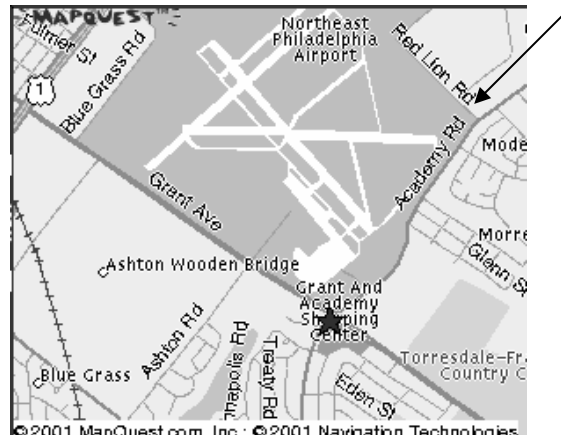
CW Practice: Wednesday @ 7:30 PM

Weekly net: Wednesday @ 8:00 PM you can listen to the Amateur Newsline & ARRL audio reports.

SSB Net on 28.450 +- mhz Sundays @ 9:00 AM

H.A.R.C. Monthly Meetings - The Board of Directors meets on the 2nd Thursday @ 8:00 PM. General meetings are held the 4th. Thursday @8:00 PM.

8th District Police Station, Red Lion & Academy Rd. Phila., PA EXCEPT AS ANNOUNCED



H.A.R.C maintains the 146.685 repeater located @ Univ. of PA., Phila PA with inputs in Abington, N.E. Phila, and Cherry Hill, NJ; More Club Information & Member Applications can be had by contacting any of the Directors via E-mail. Info@harcnet.org, the web page <http://www.harcnet.org> or writing to HARC PO Box 6253, Philadelphia, PA 19136.



HARC is an
ARRL Special Service Club.

Amateur Radio Volunteers on Duty in Wilma's Wake

NEWINGTON, CT, Oct 24, 2005--Upward of 300 Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) volunteers are supporting necessary communication in Florida in the aftermath of [Hurricane Wilma](#). Early reports indicate that most of the ham radio volunteers are assisting with communication at evacuee shelters and emergency operations centers (EOCs) in more than a dozen counties. Lee and Collier counties, where Wilma made landfall, may have taken the brunt of the storm's fury. ARES/RACES teams deployed to their assignments before Wilma came ashore, and local amateurs have been able to handle any immediate communication support needs.

Wilma barreled across the Florida Peninsula in about six hours today, causing widespread property damage and power outages. One death in Florida is being blamed on the storm. More than 2 million homes were said to be without electricity. Telephone and cellular service appears to have

been less affected. The storm also caused flooding and spawned several tornadoes.

Since leaving Florida, Wilma has regained strength and is again a Category 3 hurricane with sustained winds near 115 MPH. Although forecast to weaken, Wilma is moving northeasterly at nearly 29 MPH and is expected to pick up speed over the next 24 hours.

ARRL Southern Florida Section Manager Sherri Brower, W4STB, reports the storm toppled a communications tower at the Indian River County EOC in Vero Beach, where she lives. The tower poked a hole in the building's roof, forcing the EOC's evacuation. She said the EOC was shifted to the sheriff's office, and no Amateur Radio support was required. Brower says she's without electricity but still has telephone service.

Earlier today she reported flooding in Lee and Collier counties as well as severe weather in the Okeechobee area. Much of the Florida Keys and Palm Beach are without power. ARRL Southern Florida Section Emergency Coordinator Jeff Beals, WA4AW, spent the first half of the day at a

hospital in Loxahatchee and expects to be at the Palm Beach County EOC this evening.

The Hurricane Watch Net ([HWN](#)) on 14.325 MHz stood down earlier today after 19 straight hours of activation. "Once again, countless reports were received from numerous locations and sent to the National Hurricane Center," said Assistant Net Manager Bobby Graves, KB5HAV. The HWN works in cooperation with [WX4NHC](#) at the National Hurricane Center (NHC) to gather real-time ground-level weather data to aid forecasters in predicting the storm's behavior.

Graves observed that a large number of stations checking in for this event had installed weather-measuring equipment. "This is an apparent response to the large number of storms to hit the State of Florida in the past few years," he said.

According to Graves, HWN Manager Mike Pilgrim, K5MP, in Boca Raton, Florida, lost power and the roof over his patio when the eyewall reached his location.

The Southern Florida ARES Net is in operation on 7.242 MHz and 3.940 MHz.

The Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network ([SATERN](#)) activated today at 1400 UTC on 14.265 MHz. In addition to emergency traffic, SATERN typically handles health-and-welfare traffic on the net and via its Web site. The Salvation Army reports that its relief teams in Florida have mobilized to respond to the needs of those affected by Hurricane Wilma.

Databases now are open for prospective Amateur Radio volunteers to register and for relief agencies to request Amateur Radio volunteers in Wilma's wake.

The Hurricane Wilma Disaster Communications Volunteer Registration Database now is open, thanks to site administrator Joe Tomasone, AB2M. ARRL Northern Florida Section Emergency Coordinator Joe Bushel, W2DWR, is coordinating Amateur Radio volunteers for this event. The site is intended for Amateur Radio volunteers to sign up for communication support duty on behalf of Hurricane Wilma relief and

recovery efforts in Florida, both immediate and in the near future.

At the same time, relief organizations needing Amateur Radio volunteers may register their needs on the Hurricane Wilma Amateur Radio [Volunteers Needed Clearing House](#). This is the ARRL's volunteer coordination Web site. Relief/served agencies are invited to [post](#) their *communications* requirements on this site. Amateur Radio operators also may use the site's search function to locate listings of agencies that need Amateur Radio volunteers. Volunteers should not self deploy but wait until they are contacted and assigned a tracking number.

The leadership in all three Florida ARRL sections has been evaluating volunteer resource requests and needs. SMs and SECs also have been regularly teleconferencing to coordinate their respective activities. ARRL Headquarters has been monitoring the Hurricane Wilma situation and maintaining regular contact with Field Organization leadership in the three sections.

Hurricane Response - Local Connections

Jim Gerhart, WA3DIT, brother of HARC member Carl, N3ZZK, is part of the Hillsborough team sent to the disaster area. He is operating in Gulfport Ms using his call sign followed by "Hillsborough FLA EOC team." He said he should be down there for 5 to 7 days. Jim did a lot of work during last year's Florida hurricanes. We'll have part of Jim's story at the October HARC meeting.

Bob Josuweit, WA3PZO, was interviewed by Mark Abrams, NT3V, on KYW Newsradio and several times on Amateur Radio Newline. He has written articles on ham radio and the hurricanes for CQ, HRS (Croatian Amateur Radio Society), and 9-1-1 Magazine. Ham Radio public service announcements were also aired on KYW and KYW1060 on the web.



ONE BPL SERVICE SHUTS DOWN,

ANOTHER PUSHES ON - PPL Corp. of

Allentown, PA has pulled the plug on its Internet over Power Lines experiment. PPL, a \$6 billion electric utility, was widely considered to be one of the country's leaders in BPL technology and deployment. PPL maintains that broadband over power lines works, but concluded the service would not be profitable. It blamed competition from cable modems and telephone DSL ...and a small pool of 1.3 million potential electricity customers.

But another telecom company, *Communications Technologies* (COMtek) of Chantilly, VA plans to push on in Manassas, VA, a Washington, D.C., suburb with 37,000 residents. Nine hundred households are already using the technology to get on line.

The Manassas' business model is different from PPL. The city has a joint venture with privately-owned COMTek. Manassas' electric grid is, unlike PPL's, publicly owned and COMTek uses a different BPL delivery technology.

Their arrangement is the City makes the necessary changes to the electric grid (such as installing couplers and repeaters), while COMTek maintains the servers (enabling Web hosting) and handles the marketing and customer service. This partnership allows the city and the company to focus on their respective strengths, a press release noted.

COMTek said their power outlet approach can be used in neighborhoods with below-ground utilities, whereas the PPL's wireless method relies on the availability of telephone poles.

COMTek also claims the problem of interference is eliminated since it does not require a line-of-sight between a telephone pole-mounted transmitter and the customer's house.

Furthermore, professional installation is not required since the needed powerline modem can be mailed to the customer.

The City of Manassas hailed the availability of city-wide BPL service as "a major U.S. technology milestone" at a press conference held last Wednesday and announced that all of the city's 12,500 households and 2,500 businesses now have a new option for Internet access.

But things are not quite as rosy in Manassas as the press releases indicate. Amateur operators there have been trying to get the City of Manassas to eliminate the interference issues it keeps promising to clean up, but so far has been unable or unwilling to effectively address.

After trying unsuccessfully for months to get this resolved locally, several Amateur operators in the area renewed their formal complaints about interference from the system being operated by the City of Manassas.

The ARRL has now formally joined the battle and has demanded that the FCC require the City to resolve the harmful interference complaints or shut down the system. The League's action comes barely a week after the Manassas system was declared fully operational and touted as the first citywide commercial deployment -- as contrasted to a field trial -- in the United States.

"The Manassas system currently causes harmful interference, and it is not compliant with applicable FCC Part 15 regulations, including Section 15.5," ARRL said in a 16-page filing to the FCC's *Office of Engineering and Technology* (OET) and to the Commission's *Enforcement Bureau*. "Whatever actions either *Manassas Power* or *Communication Technologies Inc.* might have taken to relieve the problem have not been successful, and it persists to the present time. This is precisely the situation in which the system must be shut down, pending successful resolution of the severe interference."

According to the ARRL, field tests conducted not only by Manassas hams but by the U.S.

Department of the Navy found that the city's BPL system "...was an interference generator at distances of hundreds of feet from the modems on overhead power lines. It was also determined that the BPL system was susceptible to interference from nearby radio transmitters operating between 4 MHz and 20 MHz."

ARRL To FCC: Shut Down BPL System

In support of amateur radio operator complaints of interference, the **American Radio Relay League** (ARRL) is asking the **Federal Communications Commission** to shut down the two-year-old broadband over power line (BPL) system in Washington, D.C., suburb Manassas, Va. The ARRL action comes barely a week after

the Manassas system was declared fully operational and touted as the first citywide commercial deployment – as contrasted to a field trial – in the United States.

Communication Technologies Inc. (ComTek) operates the BPL system over the municipally owned electric power grid. The ARRL says the network has been the target of unresolved interference complaints dating back at least to early 2004, none of which has resulted "in any action or even interest" on the part of the FCC's Office of Engineering and Technology staff, the group says.

"The Manassas system currently causes harmful interference, and it is not compliant with applicable FCC Part 15 regulations, including Section 15.5," the ARRL said in a 16-page filing yesterday to the OET and to the FCC's Enforcement Bureau. "Whatever actions either **Manassas Power** or Communication Technologies Inc. might have taken to relieve the problem have not been successful, and it persists to the present time. This is precisely the situation in which the system must be shut down, pending successful resolution of the severe interference."

The ARRL and two complaining Manassas radio amateurs cite interference "so severe" that "no communications can be conducted in the amateur allocations subject to interference," accusing the city of "stonewalling in the face of repeated complaints." The BPL system currently serves 900 customers out of a potential of 12,500 households passed, and ARRL's attorneys admit the interference noted in the complaint occurred prior to any large-scale BPL deployment by Manassas. However, they believe the interference will increase as BPL subscribers increase.

According to the ARRL, field tests conducted not only by Manassas hams but by the U.S.

Department of the Navy found that the city's BPL system "was an interference generator at distances of hundreds of feet from the modems on overhead power lines. It was also, incidentally, determined that the system was susceptible to interference from nearby radio transmitters operating between 4 MHz and 20 MHz."

The ARRL has been fighting against BPL almost since the technology was born, a battle that intensified as the FCC finally set rules for the technology last year. In that rule making the ARRL lost almost all of its arguments, but obviously the group isn't giving up the battle quite yet.

The following is an excerpt from a column by John C. Dvorak in Nov 8, 2005 issue of PC Magazine.

"Two weeks after Hurricane Katrina, it was reported that over 100 Internet networks were still down in Louisiana, as well as another dozen elsewhere that had been in the path of the hurricane. So much for the notion that the Web is impossible to kill. Hard to have an Internet with no power! WiMAX and other solutions are useless, too, though I suppose a generator would be useful for WiMAX. Whatever the case, the most overlooked participants in the Katrina relief effort were the ham radio folks, who were doing whatever they could as ad hoc emergency dispatchers, creating their own network within the system. These dedicated persons pride themselves on their ability to do worldwide communications under adverse conditions, and the ARRL and its members, as well as others, were a big part of the aid effort. Of course, since amateur radio is anything but trendy in today's Xbox, gene-splicing world, there was zero coverage of its contribution in the mainstream press, and these people are not the world's greatest self-promoters. At least some of us are paying attention. Good Work, guys! Bush should be giving medals to you all.

2nd Annual EPA Emergency Communications Conference a successful event.

The second annual Emergency Communications Conference was held on October 22 and 23, 2005 in Shamokin Dam, PA. The Conference featured programs on Saturday by Lor Kutchins, W3QA, who presented programs on WinLink, Susan Graybill, KB3EVC, who talked about the York Area H.E.A.R.S. program. Scott Walker, N3SW, STM EPA, who presented a program on NTS. Bob Josuweit, WA3PZO, who gave a program on Public Relations & dealing with news media. The featured program for Saturday was a presentation about US Air Flight 93 Crash on September 11, 2001 by Richard Lohr, N3VFG, EMA Director Somerset County PA. Sunday's programs included talks by Tony Camillocci, KA3BPN, PEMA Eastern Area Director. Chris Snyder, NG3F SEC EPA, PEMA. Dave Nichols, EMA Director Snyder County. All of the presenters did an excellent job and were a big reason the event was so successful. de WB3FPL



HOLMESBURG AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
P.O. Box 6253 Philadelphia, PA 19136
“Serving the Community Through Ham Radio”

Next Meeting: Thursday October 27th .
8PM @ 8th District - Red Lion & Academy Rds.